This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.   (Currently Amended) A method of failsoft operation, the method comprising:

~~providing~~ receiving a policy ~~to~~ at a ~~facility~~component of a content delivery system, the policy defining two sets of rules for handling ~~database~~ transaction approvals ~~requested by the facility from a database~~in the content delivery system at ~~the~~ a time of a user device request for content ~~download~~ that identifies video or audio content and requests access to the video or audio content, a first set of rules governing normal operation when communication with ~~the~~ a database is successful, and failsoft rules governing limited transaction approval in the event of a communication failure between the ~~facility~~ component and the database ~~at a time of a content download request~~, wherein the limited transaction approval includes a purchase cost limit;

determining that a communication failure exists between the ~~facility~~component and the database at a time of a ~~content download~~ request that identifies video or audio content and requests access to the video or audio content, the request being received from a user device of the content delivery system; and

in response to determining that a communication failure exists between the component and the database at the time of the request, using, by a ~~facility~~ computing device of the component, the failsoft rules to ~~preliminarily grant approval~~perform a transaction included in a process for providing the user device limited access to content requested by the request ~~for the requested transaction in response to determining that a communication failure exists between the facility and the database at the time of the download request~~.

2.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising:

in response to resolution of the communication failure, transmitting an update from the ~~facility~~component to the database informing the database of the ~~requested~~transaction.

3-4.   (Canceled).

5.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein [[ ]]the ~~facility~~ component is a ~~cable television~~ headend and the content delivery system is a cable television delivery system.

6-7.   (Canceled).

8.   (Currently Amended) A method of failsoft operation comprising:

receiving, at a ~~facility~~ computing device of a content delivery system, a set of failsoft rules~~, the rules~~ governing approval of one or more transactions in the event of a communication failure between a component of the content delivery system and a database, wherein the set of failsoft rules include a purchase cost limit and the computing device is part of the component~~defining a communication failure content download cost limit~~;

receiving a request for content at the ~~facility~~ component from a user device of the content delivery system, the request for content identifying video or audio content and requesting access to the video or audio content;

as at least part of a process for obtaining approval of the request for content, attempting to communicate to an authorization computer a request for approval of the request for content;

determining that a communication failure has delayed or disrupted the process ~~of~~ for obtaining approval of the request for content~~from the authorization computer~~; and

~~in response to the communication failure~~upon determining that the communication failure has delayed or disrupted the process for obtaining approval of the request for content, approving or denying, by the component, the request for content according to the ~~facility's~~ received set of failsoft rules.

9.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 further comprising:

in response to resolution of the communication failure, transmitting an update from the ~~facility~~ component to the authorization computer informing the authorization computer of ~~the requested transaction~~a transaction that occurred during the communication failure and that was performed as part of the approval or denial of the request for content.

10.   (Canceled).

11.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8 wherein the ~~facility~~ component is a ~~cable television~~ headend and the content delivery system is a cable television delivery system.

12-17. (Canceled).

18.   (Currently Amended) A content delivery method, comprising:

receiving, at a ~~first~~ computing device of a content delivery system, a user request for ~~downloading~~ content from a user device of the content delivery system, the user request identifying video or audio content and requesting access to the video or audio content, wherein a process for granting ~~access to the content~~ approval of the user request requires the computing device to request authorization from a central ~~facility~~ database of the content delivery system; ~~and~~

determining that a communication failure exists between the computing device and the central ~~facility~~ database ~~at the time of a content download request~~ when the computing device is performing the process for granting approval of the user request;

determining whether approval of the request would exceed a predetermined cost limit established in a communication failure failsoft rule stored at the computing device; and

upon determining that the communication failure exists and that approval of the request would not exceed the predetermined cost limit, granting limited approval to the request and transmitting data responsive to the request to the user device ~~and limiting the download to a predetermined communication failure cost limit established in a communication failure content download failsoft rule~~.

[[.]]

19.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 18 wherein the ~~receiving occurs at~~ computing device is part of a ~~cable television system~~ headend and the content delivery system is a cable television delivery system.

20.   (Canceled)

21.   (Currently Amended) The ~~system~~ method of claim 18 wherein the central database is ~~realized as~~ an LDAP/X.500 directory.

22.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the ~~request for content~~request is a request to view pay-per-view television content.

23.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the ~~request for content~~request is a request to add service to a user's subscription plan.

24.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein the request to add service is a request to add one or more television channels to a television subscriber's subscription lineup.

25.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, ~~further comprising~~wherein determining that the communication failure exists is based on communication delay.

26.   (Currently Amended) The method of claim 8, further comprising ~~the facility~~receiving, at the computing device, periodic updates to the set of failsoft rules from the authorization computer.

27.   (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the content delivery system is a video service delivery system that provides video services to a plurality of user devices.

28.   (New) The method of claim 1, wherein performing the transaction normally includes communicating with the database, but as a result of determining that the communication failure exists, the transaction is performed by the component without communicating with the database.

29.   (New) The method of claim 1, further comprising providing, by the component, the user device at least limited access to the audio or video content requested by the request.